

Parasha Meditation Miketz

Bereishit 41:1–44:17

By Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum

Igniting the Darkest Shadow sides of your Soul

Introduction:

Elevating and Connecting the Estranged

Parashat Miketz opens with Yosef's release from prison. The name Yosef means to increase or add. Yosef's status increased greatly in our Torah portion from being a slave in prison to becoming the viceroy of Pharaoh. When Rachel named Yosef, she prayed, "May G*d add (*yosef*) to me another son (*ben acher*)."¹ Metaphorically, this means that Yosef has the ability to elevate worldly entities that have been estranged (*acher*) from their Divine core. In Yosef they are brought close and revealed as a manifestation of Hashem. The persona of Yosef refers to the soul of Jewish people, and the prison in which Yosef was held to the body, and the material existence as a whole. At times the physical confines the infinite power of the soul, and the limits of material existence, conceal its Divine source.

The Temporary Darkness of the World

"It was after the end (מקץ) of two years..."² "קץ עָשָׂה לְחֹשֶׁךְ" – "He puts an end to darkness..."³ Hashem determined a certain limited time for the world to be in darkness. All darkness in the world both for the general community of Israel and for the individual emanate from the *yetzer hara*. Only as long as the *yetzer hara* is in the world, will there be darkness in the world, as it states, "...the stones of darkness and the shadow of death."⁴ As soon as the *yetzer hara* is uprooted from the world, darkness will cease from the world...⁵ The way to get out of being submerged in darkness, is by withstanding the tests of the *yetzer hara*. Then we can reach the level of "He puts an end to darkness..."⁶ As soon as the light is shining for us, and we perceive the emptiness of worldly pursuits, then the *yetzer hara* fades away. The aim of the *yetzer hara* is to darken our eyes, in order to prevent us from seeing the light of Hashem. This is the meaning of "They have eyes but they do not see."⁷ Using their eyes for selfish pleasures of this world, prevent people from seeing the Divine light. This was the intent of the Greeks "who darkened the eyes of Israel,"⁸ so they wouldn't see the light of G*d. The only way to break the shell of the Greeks is by igniting the light.⁹ We are sent into this world to reveal G*dliness. The material nature of worldly existence may initially restrict the expression of our true nature, but the constraints will be temporary. Ultimately, just as Yosef became the ruler of Egypt, every Jew will be empowered to reveal how infinite Divinity permeates finite material existence.

¹ Bereishit 30:24.

² Bereishit 41:1.

³ Iyov 28:3.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Bereishit Rabah, Parasha 89, Piska 1.

⁶ Iyov 28:3.

⁷ Tehillim 115:5.

⁸ Bereishit Rabah, Parasha 2, Piska 4.

⁹ Netivat Shalom, Parashat Miketz p. 259.f



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The Dawn of Yosef's Redemption

The word *miketz* means not only “at the end” but can also refer to the beginning. Thus $\aleph\aleph/miketz$ in our Torah reading refers either to the “end” – the final two years – of the Yosef’s suffering in Egypt, or to the “beginning” – the two years leading to his attainment of power. According to the first interpretation, *miketz* refers to the most difficult challenges Yosef faced in Egypt, before daybreak when darkness becomes most powerful. According to the second interpretation, *miketz* refers to the dawn of Yosef’s redemption.

Confronting the Challenges of the End of Days

The *Zohar* speaks of the *ketz l'yamina* – “the right end,” and *ketz lismola* – “the left end.”¹⁰ There is a connection between the two. Hidden within the challenges of *ketz lismola* – the last moments of exile – are G*dly sparks. Confronting these challenges taps into the Divine energies and brings *ketz l'yamina* – the beginning of the Redemption.¹¹ This is the concept of Mashiach ben Yosef,¹² preceding our final redemption. May the transition experienced by Yosef become manifest for our people, leaping from the depth of exile to the final *ketz hayamin* of Redemption!

Meditation:

Sit comfortable in your chair; close your eyes and take several deep breaths, and let go of anything you may be holding on to.

1. Breathe in Hashem’s life-giving energy, breath out, tensions, negativity and worry. Breathe in while imagine the letter \aleph/mi , breathe out to the image of $\aleph/ketz$, repeat five times. \aleph/mi – the flowing water drawing out the essence of the word $\aleph/ketz$, in which the beginning is in-wedged in the end.
2. Allow yourself to go deep into the darkness of the $\aleph/ketz$. Let the lower line of the *kuf* take you below the line; to that darkness and constriction you feel in your body. As you continue to inhale \aleph/mi , and exhale while visualizing $\aleph/ketz$, go deeper into your body and allow yourself to get in touch with any pain or tension you may be holding in any part of your body.
3. Zoom into the body part which is tense or painful and keep breathing \aleph/mi – $\aleph/ketz$ into it. Feel how the tension is gradually lifting as you are breathing yourself out of the constraints of your body. “ $\aleph\aleph$ לְהַשִּׁיב” – “He puts an end to darkness...”¹³ Your body will no longer confine you.
4. Inside of your heart you feel a warm fuzziness of Divine light. Breathe this light into each part of your body, while visualizing \aleph/mi – $\aleph/ketz$. As all of your tensions evaporate, feel how each of your limbs, from head to toe, acts as an extension and auxiliary to your soul.
5. Focus your visualization on the letter $\aleph/tzadi$ which looks like a tree. The duality of the branches of the letter $\aleph/tzadi$ is united in its unified root below. Get in touch with the dualities of your life, the branches pulling you in different directions. Just as the branches are connected with their long root

¹⁰ *Zohar*, Part 1, 63a.

¹¹ These teachings are based on In The Garden of The Torah, Insights of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson on the Weekly Torah Reading, Volume 1, p.57-61.

¹² *Babylonian Talmud, Sukah 52a.*

¹³ *Iyov 28:3.*

below the line, realize that your body and soul, the material and spiritual are rooted in the unity of all, in a reality hidden below the line.

6. The lower line of the ending $\aleph/tzadi$ is the root of your soul, which encompasses all of you. Even your *yetzer hara* – the shadow side of your soul, has its spark of holiness that needs to be released. Breathe deeply and accept yourself completely including your shadow side.

7. Tune into one of your destructive desires rooted in your *yetzer hara*. It could be the desire for chocolate, a feeling of jealousy, a laziness to exert yourself, a lack of motivation to pray. Explore this feeling within you; remember a situation when it had power over you. Look into yourself at the moment of your embarrassment, as your shadow side gets the better of you.

8. Within the peak of your negativity look for a spark of positive motivation! Perhaps your craving for sweetness, was for the sweetness of being close to Hashem, your jealousy could be rooted in your desire to grow and attain new heights that you see in another. Your lack of motivation to pray could be an expression of your desire to reconnect with Hashem in an even deeper way.... Use the spiritual flashlight of \aleph/mi – $\aleph/ketz$ as a search-engine, searching for hidden sparks of holiness within the darkest part of your psyche.

9. As you find them one by one, allow the spiritual flashlight of \aleph/mi – $\aleph/ketz$ to become a magnet extracting the hidden sparks below and manifesting them above.

10. As your hidden sparks of goodness buried in the darkness surface, welcome these sparks back home one by one by visualizing and embracing your hidden goodness. Allow yourself to get in touch with your personal self-image. Do you feel better about yourself? Are you able to accept yourself completely even your shadow sides? Or at least accept yourself a little more?

Notes:

Both the letters of the word $\aleph/ketz$ extend below the line. This indicates their ability to extract and elevate fallen sparks. The letter \aleph/kuf with its numerical value of one hundred (ten times the ten *sefirot*) stands for *kedushah*, “holiness.” The descending *zayin* of the *kuf* below the line, symbolizes the ability to conceive Hashem even in the worlds antithetical to the revealed Presence of G*d. The \aleph/kuf symbolizes in particular the reality of fallen sparks, as well as the paradox of the simultaneous omnipresence of G*d’s transcendence and immanence. When the letter \aleph/kuf precedes the letter $\aleph/tzadi$, the word $\aleph/ketz$, the “end” of time, is formed. This hints to the verse: “...He has set an end [*ketz*] to darkness.” The “end” – the coming of *Mashiach* and the subsequent era of resurrection, is the ultimate revelation of the great light and energy latent within the secret of the letter \aleph/kuf . The innate holiness of each of its sparks insures its ultimate redemption and elevation by the *tzadik* of the following letter. The *tzadi* is the eighteenth letter of the *alef-beit*, the *gematria* of *chai*, “life” – thus symbolizing the power to enliven the fallen sparks, as represented by the \aleph/kuf . The letter $\aleph/tzadi$ with its long root resembles the “tree of the field” to which humanity is compared.¹⁴ In its hidden root, all reality is united. Ultimate unity is the secret of ultimate elevation.¹⁵

¹⁴ Devarim 20:19

¹⁵ Based on *The Hebrew Letters*, by Rabbi Yitzchak Ginsburgh

About Us



Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum

Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum, a native of Denmark, is Founder and Director of Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin. She holds a Bachelor of Education in Bible and Jewish Philosophy from Michlala Jerusalem College for Women, and a Masters of Art in Jewish History from Touro College. Chana Bracha also began her practice as a spiritual healer through Emuna, tefila and energy work.

*For more than two decades Chana Bracha has taught Bible studies with special emphasis on women's issues in Israel and the United States. She creates curricula emphasizing women's spiritual empowerment through traditional Torah values. Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin located in the Judean Hills of Israel offers a unique program to women of all ages and backgrounds to learn in a holistic Torah study environment that nurtures the mind, body and soul. Intensive textual study of Tanach, Halacha and Chassidut are woven together with creative spiritual expression, and connection with the land of Israel through organic gardening, herbology, Jewish sources of healing and sustainable living. Classes in Jewish mysticism, Chassidism and Jewish meditation are directed at the spiritual thirst so prominent in our times. In 2010 Rebbetzin Chana Bracha published her first book, *Women at the Crossroads: A Woman's Perspective on the Weekly Torah Portion*.*

Chana Bracha has a married son and several granddaughters. She lives with her husband and younger son on the land of the Judean hills, Israel.

If you are interested in:

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or visit her blog: <http://rebbetzinchanabracha.blogspot.com/2010/11/emunah-healing-for-women.html>

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